

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. ARABS DROP UNGA CHALLENGE TO ISRAEL

USUN HAS LEARNED FROM A SENIOR LEBANESE OFFICIAL THAT, WHILE THE ARABS WILL VOICE OBJECTIONS TO ISRAEL AT BOTH THE CREDENTIALS MEETING AND THE PLENARY, THEY WILL NOT CALL FOR A FORMAL VOTE AGAINST SEATING ISRAEL IN THE UNGA. (CONFIDENTIAL) USUN 4441, 9/24.)

2. OPEC: SAG PREDICTS FIVE PERCENT

STRESSING THAT HIS VIEWS MUST NOT BE LEAKED BEFORE THE SEPTEMBER 24 MEETING, SAUDI OIL MINISTER YAMANI TOLD AMBASSADOR AKINS THAT HE BELIEVES OPEC WILL ADOPT A FIVE PERCENT PRICE RISE, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A FURTHER FIVE PERCENT IN DECEMBER. HE SAID THAT HE HAS THE CONCURRENCE OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN ALGERIA, VENEZUELA, IRAQ, AND THE UAE. YAMANI ELABORATED:

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--THIS WILL ISOLATE THE SHAH, WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO RISK THE DESTRUCTION OF OPEC BY BUCKING THE DECISION.

--THE EFFORTS OF THE SAG ARE IN NO WAY A RESPONSE TO THE SUPPOSED "NEW HARD LINE" OF THE USG.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: THERE WAS NOTHING TENTATIVE IN YAMANI'S PREDICTION. HE MAY, HOWEVER, BE EXAGGERATING SAUDI INFLUENCE OVER OPEC, AND ANY PREMATURE PUBLICATION OF HIS REMARKS WOULD WEAKEN HIS POSITION. IF THE DECISION ANNOUNCED IS FOR FIVE PERCENT, I STRONGLY URGE THAT WE NOT REFER TO ANY "TRIUMPH" OR "RESULT OF OUR PRESSURE." OUR REACTION SHOULD TAKE THE FORM OF "IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE, BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE ANY INCREASE WAS JUSTIFIED." (CONFIDENTIAL) JIDDA 6526 (EXDIS), 9/23.)

3. LEBANON: UNCERTAIN OPTIMISM

EMBASSY BEIRUT REPORTS THAT THE CEASEFIRE ARRANGED BY KHADDAM IS BACK ON TRACK AND THAT CONDITIONS ARE MUCH IMPROVED. FRANGIE AND CHAMOUN "GUARANTEED" THE CEASEFIRE ON THE PART OF THE CHRISTIANS, AND KHADDAM, AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH MOSLEM AND LEFTIST LEADERS, DID SO ON THE MOSLEM SIDE. THE EMBASSY ALSO NOTES:

--MUCH DEPENDS ON PROGRESS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS IN THE FORMATION OF THE POLITICAL RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE THAT MAKES UP STAGE TWO OF THE PLANNED ARMISTICE.

--AFTER RECEIVING A PLEA FOR MODERATION FROM THE POPE AND A CONCILIATORY MESSAGE FROM JUMBLATT, THE CHRISTIAN MARONITES ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE A RESTRAINED LINE.

--BEIRUT IS IN ECONOMIC CHAOS WITH A MAJOR EXODUS OF FOREIGN FIRMS POSSIBLE IN THE COMING MONTHS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: EVEN IF THE CEASEFIRE HOLDS LONG ENOUGH TO CLOSE THE CURTAIN ON ROUND FOUR, FEW OBSERVERS ANTICIPATE THAT IT WILL PROVE AN EFFECTIVE SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS. NOTHING BASIC HAS YET BEEN SETTLED. (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT
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11858, 9/23.)

4. TURKISH LEADERS ON UDI

EMBASSY ANKARA REPORTS BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION HESITATE TO PUBLICLY SUPPORT UDI. BOTH DEMIREL AND ECEVIT APPEAR STRONGLY OPPOSED. HOWEVER, THEY SEEM EQUALLY RELUCTANT IN THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD TO GO ON RECORD AGAINST

DENKTASH. (CONFIDENTIAL) ANKARA 7247, 9/22.)

5. ITALIAN MFA ON EC AID TO PORTUGAL

ITALIAN MFA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GUAZZARONI TOLD EMBASSY ROME SEPTEMBER 22 THAT THE EC IS NOT CONSIDERING BALANCE OF PAYMENTS ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL BUT IS FOCUSING RATHER ON "INVESTMENT ASSISTANCE." OF THE NINE EC MEMBERS, ONLY THE FRG HAS ANY PLANS TO PROVIDE AID ON A BILATERAL BASIS. (CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 13687, 9/23.)

6. COLOMBIA-PANAMA: LOPEZ AS GO-BETWEEN

EMBASSY BOGOTA REPORTS THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS PAID AN UNSCHEDULED CALL ON PRESIDENT LOPEZ SEPTEMBER 22. HE LATER TOLD THE PRESS THAT THEY DISCUSSED MATTERS RELATED TO THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AND REVEALED THAT LOPEZ WOULD, DURING HIS US VISIT, BE THE BEARER OF A MESSAGE FROM THE GOP TO PRESIDENT FORD. TORRIJOS REFERRED TO LOPEZ AS A "GO-BETWEEN" CARRYING THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE. (CONFIDENTIAL) BOGOTA 9158, 9/23.)

7. THE END OF "OLD LAOS"

CHARGE CORCORAN PROVIDES HIS ASSESSMENT OF OUR PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED RELATIONS WITH LAOS:

--THE GOVERNMENT WE ARE DEALING WITH IS MERELY A PUPPET IN THE HANDS OF COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY WITH WHOM WE HAVE NO CONTACT.

--THOSE IN POWER IN LAOS ARE NOT INTERESTED IN OBSERVING NORMAL DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE OR IN SETTLING ISSUES
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PENDING WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES ON THE BASIS OF THEIR MERITS.

--THE "REAL GOVERNMENT" IS CLOSELY ORIENTED TOWARD VIETNAM AND UNLIKELY TO PURSUE AN INDEPENDENT LINE.

--THE GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE THINGS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE USG ONCE IT DETERMINES THAT NO ASSISTANCE IS FORTHCOMING.

--ALTHOUGH WE MAY BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS IN THE SHORT RUN, WE CANNOT IN THE LONG RUN WITHOUT PAYING A GREAT PRICE IN THE AREAS OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE, ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS, AND PROTECTION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS.

CHARGE'S COMMENT: OBVIOUSLY THE WHOLE QUESTION OF US-LAO
RELATIONS IS BIGGER THAN LAOS, BUT WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO
OPERATE ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE "OLD LAOS" IS GONE AND
NORMAL DIPLOMACY HAS GONE WITH IT. (SECRET) VIENTIANE 5728
(EXDIS), 9/23.) ROBINSON

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